



**LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF
WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES**

**CUSTOMER SERVICE PLAN &
CUSTOMER SERVICE EMPLOYEE ACTION PLAN
2005**

A Commitment to Service through Wildlife & Fisheries Management

A Product of the Customer Service Committee
Submitted to the Louisiana Division of Administration

Written by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
Socioeconomic Research and Development Section

October, 2004

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**The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
Customer Service Plan
and
Customer Service Employee Action Plan, 2005**

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LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES CUSTOMER SERVICE PLAN, 2005

Introduction

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries has long sought to enhance the enjoyment of the state's fish and wildlife resources. The concept of customer service is encapsulated in the Department's mission statement (Box 1) which outlines its commitment to protecting and managing these valuable assets for "the benefit of current and future generations."

The Department's customers come from many different places with different goals and backgrounds. They include traditional recreational user groups like anglers, hunters, and boaters. There are birdwatchers, hikers, and wildlife photographers. They number many men and women who depend directly upon the state's bountiful resources for their livelihoods: charter boat captains, commercial fishers, and seafood processors, dealers, and retailers. Educators, students, landowners, lessors of private water bottoms, and other members of the wider public are also part of the Department's customer base.

After decades of dedication to serving and satisfying the public, the Department formalized its efforts by creating the Customer Service Committee in 1998, pursuant to Governor Foster's Executive Order Number MJF 97-39 (Appendix). This Committee, composed of experienced and insightful employees throughout the agency, discusses ideas and methods for enhancing quality customer service within the Department. It conducts regular analyses of customer service performance and publishes an annual *Customer Service Assessment Report*. It also prepares this Customer Service Plan as a cooperative and coordinated project involving all levels of staff from every Office and administrative unit throughout the Department.

Box 1.**The Mission of the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries**

The mission of the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries is:

- to manage, conserve, and promote the wise utilization of Louisiana's renewable fish and wildlife resources and their supporting habitats through replenishment, protection, enhancement, research, development and education for the benefit of current and future generations;
- to provide opportunities for knowledge of and use and enjoyment of these resources; and
- to provide for a safe environment for users of these resources.

The goal of the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Customer Service Plan is to help the Department serve its customers more completely. Its aim is to enhance the delivery of effective, efficient, and responsive customer service of the highest caliber through a five-step plan (Box 2).

This Plan calls on the Department to identify key services, to set service standards and to display them prominently. The Customer Service Committee is instructed to listen to the customers and to assess the quality of service received. It will also seek new ways to improve the quality of service the Department extends to the public and train its employees in meeting the customers' expectations.

Box 2.**The Goals of the Customer Service Plan**

- Identify key customer services
- Set and display prominently the minimum expected customer service standards
- Seek input from customers and employees to identify possible changes to meet customers' needs and expectations
- Find new ways to provide better overall customer satisfaction
- Provide customer service training for employees

Identifying Key Customer Services

The Department's key customer services have been outlined in its mission statement and implemented through decades of practice. The myriad activities that the Department performs on the public's behalf may be placed in four major categories (Table 1): natural resource management; enforcement and safety; public access; and education and information.

Customer Service Standards

For any plan to work, it must have a standard, a set of ideals and expectations against which it can form its goals and priorities. The Minimum Expected Customer Service Standards (Box 3) create the "yardsticks" that the Department will use to determine if its performance "measures up" to its established norms for customer service.

Table 1. Key Customer Services

Natural Resource Management
Conserving, promoting, and protecting resources Replenishing, enhancing, and strengthening resources Researching methods to improve resource management Authorizing the use of resource (i.e., through license and permits issuance)
Enforcement and Public Safety
Registering and inspecting water craft Compliance patrols and inspection Investigating accidents and thefts Business audits, inspections, and investigations Search and rescue operations
Public Access
Making resources available Technical assistance Responding to inquiries
Education and Information
Educational programs Information dissemination (e.g., maps, pamphlets, and magazines) Promoting safe enjoyment of the outdoors Publicizing Department employment opportunities

These Standards were set by the Customer Service Committee but they were ultimately determined by the customers whose expectations the Department aims to meet. The customers form their expectations based in their own prior experiences with private and public institutions as well as their own personal beliefs about acceptable treatment and behavior. It is the Department's role to comply with the customer's needs.

Customers expect to be treated courteously, fairly, and promptly. They want answers to their questions that are free of unintelligible jargon, bureaucratic gobbledegook, legalistic bombast, and meaningless acronyms. They would like a variety of products and services, made readily available in a safe, clean, and pleasant environment. In short, the Department's customers want what customers of any business or organization want: to be treated decently and respectfully.

Box 3.

Minimum Customer Service Standards

- We will always treat our customers with courtesy and respect.
- We will provide our customers with information that is current and accurate. If unsure, our staff will find a more knowledgeable person to assist.
- We will work continually to streamline and improve our services.
- We will make every effort to communicate with our customers in a clear, understandable manner.
- We will maintain a neat appearance and a positive attitude.
- We will respond promptly to all inquiries, requests, suggestions and complaints. Every effort will be made to provide a complete and accurate response.
- We will provide fair and consistent treatment to all customers.
- We will encourage feedback and actively listen to our customers so that we may better understand their motivations and how to best provide products, services and information.

Every employee knows that every customer deserves to be treated with dignity and respect. The bustle of the workaday world can obscure this fact which is why the Customer Service Standards should be posted in a prominent place in every office as a reminder to every employee that he or she should provide the same level of service that he or she would expect to receive as a customer in another establishment.

Soliciting Information from Customers and Employees

Having established the standards for quality customer service, the Department must then take regular measurements to see if it is meeting its goal or falling behind. The best way to do so is to contact the customers and employees and allow them the opportunity to tell the Department whether or not it attains these standards.

Contact with Customers

Regular contact with customers is obtained through telephone calls, personal visits, at monthly Commission meetings, and other periodic public meetings held throughout the state. These informal interactions with customers do not always leave a documented record that may be analyzed systematically. More structured interactions occur through two permanent instruments, the customer comment and suggestion card and the internet comment card, and occasional topical surveys.

The customer service comment and suggestion card is an 8-inch by 5.75-inch placard with 4 open-ended questions, 9 multiple-choice questions, and room to write comments and optional personal information such as name and address. It is available at 20 Wildlife and Fisheries facilities throughout the state (Box 4). These forms may be mailed directly to the Customer Service representative in Baton Rouge but are most frequently deposited into secure drop boxes at 20 Department sites throughout Louisiana.

Box 4

Customer Comment and Suggestion Card Box Locations

A. Baton Rouge Headquarters - Main Lobby

B. District Offices – Minden, Monroe, Alexandria/Pineville, Ferriday, Lake Charles,
Opelousas, Baton Rouge Annex, New Orleans, Thibodaux

C. Marine Fisheries Facilities – Bourg, Slidell

D. Inland Fisheries Facilities - New Iberia, LaComb Fish Hatchery

E. Fur and Refuge Facilities - Rockefeller Wildlife Refuge

F. Wildlife Facilities - Dewey Hills Wildlife Management Area (WMA),
Sherburne WMA, Woodworth Firing Range

G. Education Facilities - Waddill WMA, Booker-Fowler Fish Hatchery

The internet comment card is available on the Department's web site. It contains 12 items plus room for comments and suggestions and optional personal information such as name, address, telephone number, and e-mail address.

The Customer Service Program received 36 completed customer service comment and suggestion cards in 2004. This is lower than the number received in 2003 (43) but is slightly higher than the number received in 2002 (30).

The Customer Service Program received 104 completed internet comment cards in 2004. This is a decrease from 174 in 2002 and 123 in 2003.

The Customer Service Committee in 2005 will examine ways to encourage more people to use the comment cards and internet comment cards. The Committee will shorten both forms by deleting or revising those questions that are most frequently unanswered. In addition, the Committee would like to make the internet comment form and the comment card more similar to and consistent with each other.

The Customer Service Committee would like to raise the visibility of the internet comment form on the Department's web page. The current configuration (November 2004) of the Department's internet site, however, may limit the ability to achieve this end in the short-term. In the intermediate- and long-terms, however, once the web page is revised and updated, the Committee will ask the Computer Section to include a prominent feature on the home page drawing internet users to the customer comment form.

The Customer Service Committee would like to give more customers an opportunity to complete a customer service comment card. The Committee will ask Wildlife and Fisheries personnel, especially those at Licensing counters, to distribute copies of the card to as many customers as feasible. They will ask the customers to complete them and deposit them in the comment card boxes.

Contact with Employees

Employees¹ who deal directly with the public are an invaluable source of ideas on improving the efficiency and quality of service. These may originate with the employees themselves or through the customers they serve. The Customer Service Program tries to construct mechanisms for the collection and distribution of these ideas and suggestions from the Department's employees.

These mechanisms may be structured or unstructured, permanent or periodic. Unstructured mechanisms include employees' informal discussions with coworkers and supervisors, staff meetings, and periodic review meetings. These may be effective though they may not produce a documented record that may be analyzed formally.

¹ Those who also work for the Department on a voluntary basis –not just those on the payroll – may also provide valuable insight.

Structured mechanisms typically leave documentation. To assist the Department in obtaining a record of its employees' views and opinions, the Customer Service Program designs and implements a variety of tools for employee input. This includes periodic written surveys on selected topics sent to all employees as well as a permanent mechanism that employees may use at their choosing: the employee comment card available on the Department's intranet site. All are confidential and encourage a frank expression of views.

The last Department-wide survey of employees, administered in 2003, examined the Human Resources Section. This effort produced 234 responses from employees and yielded valuable information about this section of the Department. The results are summarized in the report, *The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Human Resources Section Survey: An Assessment*, 2004.

The Customer Service Committee will design and implement another survey of the employee population, beginning in November, 2004. This is planned as a general survey to determine current employee concerns and to devise means of improving the quality of service the Department provides to its customers.

The intranet employee comment card is a permanently available, but infrequently used, instrument of communication. The Customer Service Program received no intranet employee comment cards in 2004. This is not inconsistent with the low number of employee comment cards received in each of the past several years: 2 in 2001; 1 in 2002; and 5 in 2003. The low rate of use for this form in general may be due to a lack of awareness of the employee comment card² or the difficulty in accessing it on the

² A majority of respondents (62.1 percent) to the Human Resources Section survey were not aware that the employee comment card was on the intranet site.

Department's intranet site. The lack of responses in 2004 may also be related to the fact that many employees had recently exercised their ability to send comments to the Department in the recent Human Resources Survey administered in January, 2003.

The Customer Service Committee will take measures to improve the visibility and convenience of the employee comment card. In 2005, the Customer Service Committee will send periodic messages to employees reminding them of the availability of the employee comment form on the intranet and encouraging submissions. In addition, a copy of the employee comment card will be inserted in the telephone directory that will be distributed throughout the Department in fall, 2004.

In 2005, the Customer Service Program will take the initiative in discovering actions taken by each Division to improve the quality of its service. Beginning in January, 2005, the Customer Service representative will contact the head of each Division with a request for a summary of changes and innovations that were undertaken in the previous year with the intention of improving its ability to serve its customers. These changes will be listed in the 2005 Assessment report.

Setting and Revising Customer Service Standards

Customer and employee input provide a solid basis for setting and revising Customer Service Standards. In an effort not only to maintain, but improve the quality of customer service at the Department, these Customer Service Standards are published, posted and tracked. Customer satisfaction may be used as a primary criterion when judging the performance of an office, division or section and when judging the effectiveness of management. It may also be used as a tool when making resource allocation decisions.

Addressing and Tracking Customer Comments

Employees should always try to address customer comments, positive or negative, in a clear, courteous and easy to understand manner and be fully responsive to customer concerns and needs regarding the Department's services. If an employee is unable to respond fully to a customer's situation, he or she will direct the customer to the appropriate party for a more complete resolution.

Customers' comments may take many forms or types: praise, criticism, demand, question, petition, or recommendation. The Customer Service Program classifies every comment it receives as a complaint³, compliment, request, suggestion, or "other". The Customer Service presents the count of the various comment types in its annual *Customer Service Assessment Report*.

Once a comment is received and recorded (categorized by type) by the customer service representative, it is distributed to the appropriate contact person within the Office, Section, or Program to which it relates. If a comment has merit, the administrator or supervisor-in-charge will discuss the topic with staff to determine ways to maintain the high standard of performance (for compliments), implement the suggested change (for suggestions), or improve service in the future (for complaints).

Overall Satisfaction

The *Customer Service Assessment Report* will provide a measure of overall customer satisfaction for the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. It will quantify the number of comments that satisfy customers' expectations for seven elements of customer

³ The Department recognizes that not all customer complaints may be satisfied or rectified. Some customers' dissatisfaction may relate to rules or restrictions that place limits on an individual's actions for the protection of natural resources and the promotion of the public good. Other complaints may emanate from sources beyond the Department's jurisdiction or authority as with state laws or federal regulations or policies.

service: courtesy, attentiveness, clearness, timeliness, and neatness; the degree of knowledge of Department staff; and the ability to satisfy. It will also suggest ways to improve customer service.

Dissemination of Customer Service Information

The Customer Service Program will attain its goal of improving the quality of service only if the employees responsible for bringing service to the public are aware of its plans and efforts. The Customer Service Committee must be diligent in “getting the word out,” in sharing its findings with others within the Agency.

The Customer Service Committee makes available to all employees copies of its reports, including *The Customer Service Assessment*, *The Customer Service Plan* and *Employee Action Plan*, and other survey reports. Printed reports may be sent to various Department administrators and mailed to all field offices. Additional copies are kept in the Socioeconomics Research and Development Section’s office for anybody who requests one.

A summary of the *Assessment Report* and *Customer Service Plan* is distributed to all new employees during the monthly orientation sessions. Copies of the full report are displayed on these occasions, available to anybody who may prefer the complete text.

The Committee incorporates customer service information into another widely distributed document that it produces, *The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Telephone Directory*. This annually updated resource contains telephone numbers for the Department’s employees and field offices and lists contact information by topic and region. It prominently displays the Customer Service Committee’s logo on the front cover and the Department’s Customer Service Standards on the back cover.

Of course, the need to distribute information extends beyond the Department's workforce to its customers. The Committee makes available copies of its *Assessment Report* available on the Department's website. The Committee may also promote the importance of the Customer Service Program at special public events, such as the National Hunting and Fishing Day Event and the Lamar Dixon Sportsman's Paradise Hunting and Fishing Exposition.

The Customer Service Committee presents an annual report of its efforts, findings, and progress to the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission. The report, in accordance with the executive order, is also distributed to the Governor and the Department of Administration.

Assistance by Other Offices in Disseminating Information

Many Offices within the Department assist the Committee in disseminating information. Every field office, for example, that displays a customer comment and suggestion card drop box is doing its bit in promoting the Customer Service Program.

The Human Resources Section cooperates with the Committee by including a section on the Customer Service Program into its new employee orientation. Human Resources Section personnel also distribute information to all employees about customer service training classes available through the state's Comprehensive Public Training Program (CPTP).

The Computer or Information Technology Section provides invaluable service in disseminating information regarding the Customer Service Program. This Section maintains the intranet, for use by employees and the internet website, for use by the public. The Department's home page contains a link to the Customer Service Page which

includes a description of the Program, the *Customer Service Assessment Report*, and the internet customer service comment card.

Procedures and Time Line for Reporting Customer Service Results

The Department will maintain a Customer Service Committee headed by the customer service program administrator (the Undersecretary) or his or her designee. The Committee will advise the customer service program administrator regarding the focus and direction of the program. Through the Office of Management and Finance, at the beginning of each calendar year, the Committee will implement an annual customer service assessment program that will elicit information from customers and employees for the *Customer Service Plan & Employee Action Plan* and the *Customer Service Assessment Report*.

Each Office, Division or Section will submit a summary of its customer service activities to the Customer Service Committee no later than the first day of September of each year. The Committee will develop, conduct and analyze customer and employee surveys. These surveys will identify the needs and expectations, measure satisfaction levels and solicit comments and suggestions for improving services and operations. The Committee or contractor will compare survey results with other relevant private and public agencies and with baseline information from previous surveys. Information from these surveys and the *Customer Service Assessment Report* will be used in the *Customer Service Plan* to be submitted to the Office of the Governor through the Commissioner of Administration by the first day of November of each year.

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES CUSTOMER SERVICE EMPLOYEE ACTION PLAN 2005

Introduction

The Department of Wildlife and Fisheries realizes that good customer service begins with trained, dedicated, and capable employees. With an eye toward developing the Agency's workforce and enhancing the customers' enjoyment of its service, the Customer Service Committee has created the *Customer Service Employee Action Plan*.

The *Employee Action Plan* (Box 5) will identify customer service-oriented training opportunities and provide access to the appropriate resources and programs. It will maintain and promote opportunities by which employees might communicate their suggestions and expectations, including the employee comment card available on the Department's internal website. It will collect and study employees' suggestions for improving and putting into action the Department's *Customer Service Plan*.

The Department intends to conduct periodic employee surveys. By collecting and disseminating information through the Department's intranet and electronic mail systems,

Box 5.

Customer Service Employee Action Plan, 2005

- Identify essential training needs and tools that will provide the desired level of customer service;
- Provide employees with access to available customer service training resources, programs and essential tools related to implementing customer service standards;
- Collect and analyze employee expectations, needs and suggestions for attaining, improving and implementing the Department's Customer Service Plan.
- Establish an Employee Comment form that may be printed from the Department's internal web site and submitted anonymously.

the Department aims to enhance customer service and promote an atmosphere that is conducive to accomplishing the goal of its Customer Service Plan.

Employee Customer Service Training

Employees will be given access to classes and other training methods that will help them to serve the Department's customers better. These are essential to providing employees with the knowledge required to implement the Department's Customer Service Plan effectively (Box 6).

Box 6.

Employee Customer Service Training Opportunities

- Training resources and classes through the CPTP, the Office of Telecommunications Management and other public and private entities.
- In-house training programs
 - Customer service presentation as a part of new employee orientation
 - Other presentations on a voluntary basis.
- Optional courses for “front-line” employees that develop skills needed in dealing with the public
 - Active listening skills
 - Techniques in managing difficult people with whom they come in contact.
- A telephone etiquette training course (for appropriate staff) that teaches skills on how to properly handle customers by telephone.
- Optional courses for supervisors and managers in conflict resolution, customer service training and in conducting on-the-job training. Training materials will be made available to staff employed at field facilities.
- Continuing customer service training as part of Cadet's 21-week training regimen at the Enforcement Division's Training Academy.
- On-the-job training as part of the initial orientation of new employees of other divisions and sections.

Customer Service training begins with new employee orientation for most employees or with cadet training for Enforcement agents. Training opportunities are available for employees throughout their tenure through internal training programs (like the telephone etiquette course) or external sources like the state's Comprehensive Public Training Program (CPTP).

A list of the CPTP courses offered to state employees can be found on the CPTP Internet home page (<http://www.state.la.us/cptp/cptp.htm>) or by contacting the Department's Human Resources Section. These instructional courses are designed to increase the employee's level of knowledge and confidence when interacting with the Department's customers. This will help the employee to make more informed decisions when dealing with both foreseen and unforeseen situations. All CPTP training courses are provided to departmental employees at no charge. They will be available during working hours and scheduled in coordination with the employee's supervisor and CPTP's schedule.

The Department will offer customer service training opportunities to its employees. Instructional materials on proper telephone practices and the use of electronic mail systems are available for all employees.

Employee Ideas for Customer Service

The most recent survey of employees for ideas regarding the effective delivery of customer service was in 2002-2003, a survey of employees regarding the Human Resources Section. A detailed list of ideas generated by this survey can be found in *The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Human Resources Section Survey: An Assessment*, 2004.

The success of the Human Resources Section Survey in portraying the employee perceptions of the section and in generating a positive response by the Human Resources staff encourage the Customer Service Committee to implement similar assessment survey about other sections. In 2005, the Committee plans to design and administer a general survey of Department employees to identify current strengths, to determine areas in need of improvement, and to discover methods to improve customer service.

In addition, the Committee plans to conduct an informal survey of Division heads within the Department to learn what customer service innovations they have implemented in the past year. This will provide not only a record of recent changes in the design and implementation of services but also ideas and inspirations for other Divisions within the Department.

Employees as Customers

Customer service at the Department has traditionally focused primarily upon its external customers. However, the Department recognizes that, to provide the highest quality customer service, it must look beyond the scope of the traditional definition of a customer. In this light, the Department recognizes that many of its employees, at times, are also customers of the Department. Often, departmental personnel rely on the services and assistance of employees in other divisions and sections, effectively making them customers of those divisions and sections.

Improving intradepartmental customer service will foster an atmosphere that promotes better relationships between units of the Department, better morale within the Department, and ultimately, better customer service to our external customers.

To address these customers of the Department, training is needed to provide each

employee with an awareness of how he or she serves others within the Department. A training video is available specifically for this purpose.

Periodically, surveys may be administered in order to gather information regarding employees' attitudes toward the Department, their customers, and other customer service-related issues. It is felt that it will be beneficial for administrators of the Department to be aware of the feelings and thoughts of the employees on certain issues. Administrators may be able to facilitate cooperation between units of the Department to help create an atmosphere conducive to positive customer relations.

Appendix

EXECUTIVE ORDER MJF 97-39

State Customer Service Standard

WHEREAS: it is the duty of the State of Louisiana to timely deliver government customer services that are of the highest quality and responsive to the public's needs;

WHEREAS: the State of Louisiana intends to achieve higher levels of citizen satisfaction by delivering quality, timely, and responsive government services which meet its customer service obligations;

WHEREAS: to enable the State of Louisiana to meet its goal of providing a superior level of customer service, all levels of state government employees could benefit from a statewide employee customer service training program that identifies customer expectations and assists state government employees in satisfying those expectations;

NOW THEREFORE I, M.J. "MIKE" FOSTER, JR., Governor of the State of Louisiana, by virtue of the authority vested by the Constitution and laws of the State of Louisiana, do hereby order and direct as follows:

SECTION 1: State Customer Service Standard. All departments and agencies in the Executive Branch, State of Louisiana, and all officers and employees thereof (hereafter "state agencies") shall strive to deliver to the individuals and entities they serve effective, efficient, and responsive customer service that is of the highest quality.

SECTION 2: Implementation of Standard. In implementing the state customer service standard, all state agencies that serve the public directly shall perform the following nonexclusive list of duties:

- A. identify all of the services provided by the state agency;
- B. identify the customers who are, and should be, served by the state agency;
- C. determine the service expectations of those customers;
- D. determine the present level of satisfaction those customers have with the services of the state agency;
- E. compare the state agency's present customer service performance to the level of customer service presently being delivered to customers by other governmental and/or nongovernmental entities that are models of successful customer service;

F. disseminate customer service information to the public and make available a user-friendly customer service improvement system; and

G. develop an internal structure that effectively addresses customer complaints and prevents future customer service dissatisfaction.

SECTION 3: Support for State Government Employees. Each state agency shall work with its employees to develop a state employee plan that will compliment the state agency's customer service strategy. Each plan shall describe the customer service training resources and programs being provided by the state agency for its employees who are directly serving customers and for the managers of those employees. The plan should identify the types of training resources and programs that would improve the state agency's customer service levels, indicate how those training resources and programs would improve the level of the state agency's customer service, and provide a strategy which indicates how those training resources and programs will be provided. The state employee plan shall also include the following information:

A. a detailed explanation of employee expectations and needs regarding the manner in which the state customer service standard is implemented;

B. a detailed list of employee ideas for improving the level of customer satisfaction and attaining the state customer service standard; and

C. indicate types of customer service training that is necessary to provide employees with the essential tools to deliver goods and services at the level that meets customer service standard.

SECTION 4: Annual Customer Service Plan. Beginning with the fiscal year commencing July 1, 1998, each state agency shall implement an annual customer service plan. The state agency shall develop its initial plan and submit it to the Office of the Governor, through the commissioner of Administration, by November 1, 1998. The state agency shall develop and submit an annual update by November 1 of each successive year.

The state agency's annual customer service plan shall include the state agency's customer service goals for complying with the state customer service standard that is specifically tailored to the particular service provided by the state agency. Each plan shall identify and describe the level of customer service being delivered to customers by relevant, successful governmental or nongovernmental agencies, and present a comparative evaluation of the difference in quality of the customer service provided by the state agency and by relevant, successful governmental or nongovernmental agencies. If the level of quality of the state agency's customer service is not equivalent to, or better than, the level of the relevant, successful governmental or nongovernmental agency customer service, the state agency shall explain the reason for the disparity in the customer service quality, and the action being taken to rectify the situation.

SECTION 5: Annual Customer Service Assessment. Beginning with December 1998, at the end of every calendar year, each state agency shall implement an annual customer service assessment that elicits from customers and employees information regarding:

A. changes in customer needs and expectations;

B. the level of overall customer satisfaction with the state agency's service; and

C. suggestions for improvement. This information shall be used by the state agency in measuring its overall performance level, the effectiveness of its leadership, and in allocating its resources.

SECTION 6: Miscellaneous Provisions. This Order shall not and does not create any right of action, any cause of action, or any substantive, procedural, or equitable right enforceable by, or in favor of, any person or entity against the State of Louisiana or any department, commission, board, agency, political subdivision, or officer or employee thereof.

All departments, commissions, boards, agencies, and officers of the state, or any political subdivision thereof, are authorized and directed to cooperate with the implementation of the provisions of this Order.

This Order is effective upon signature and shall continue in effect until amended, modified, terminated, or rescinded by the Governor, or terminated by operation of law.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have set my hand officially and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of the State of Louisiana, at the Capitol, in the City of Baton Rouge, on this 23rd of September, 1997.

M.J. "Mike" Foster, Jr.
Governor

ATTEST BY
THE GOVERNOR
Fox McKeithen
Secretary of the State